Transcript Discrepancies Cited

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Los Angeles Times

President Nixon told then-White House counsel John W. Dean III on March 21, 1973, that "we should buy time" by making a $120,000 hush money payment to convicted Watergate conspirator [illegible] Howard Hunt [illegible] according to a memorandum prepared by a House Judiciary Committee staff member.

The memo, which notes that "Hunt's blackmail demand . . . was subsequently paid on the same day," was one of two confidential committee memoranda obtained by the Los Angeles Times Thursday.

Both memos allege discrepancies between the edited transcripts of presidential Watergate conversations released by Mr. Nixon and transcripts of those conversations obtained by the committee.

In the March 21 transcript released by Mr. Nixon to the committee and the public, the President is quoted as saying, "We can buy time." But according to the memo, the tape shows he said, "We should buy time."

The memo states:

"The public (White House) transcripts show this as follows:

[illegible] of the defendants [illegible] because [illegible] least we can [illegible] tape says 'we should' at this point) buy the time on that as I pointed out to John [illegible]

One of the memos cites various comments from Mr. Nixon supporting a conclusion that, contrary to his public statements, he was aware of many aspects of the Watergate cover-up prior to March 21.

The other memo [illegible] excerpts of the Nixon-Dean conversation about hush money payments, with a brief excerpt which includes comments by H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, then Mr. Nixon's chief of staff, who briefly joined the conversation. The thrust of the excerpts is that the President approved the payment to Hunt.

The memos were among 14 written by William P. Dixon, a staff attorney.

A memo by Dixon written May 28 included excerpts of the March 21, 1973, presidential conversation with Dean and suggested that prior to reading the excerpts the committee members [illegible] the President's statements to the nation in a televised speech last April 29.

"He (the President) said the tapes will show persuasively and, he hoped, conclusively that he did not do anything wrong in connection with the Watergate break-in or the cover-up," Dixon wrote. He also acknowledged that the "tape of March 21 is one which different meanings could be read into by different people . . ."

The memo [illegible] many points which are included in the edited transcript, but stresses the discrepancy between "can" and "should" on the tape in the committee's possession.

A May 24 memo quoted excerpts from the March 21 tape which Dixon said "may be interpreted to support a conclusion that prior to March 21 the President"—according to Dixon—"knew about" the following:

- The infiltration of the Edmund S. Muskie presidential campaign by a group directed by G. Gordon Liddy.
- The questioning of Charles W. Colson by the FBI.
- The use of a Cuban committee for the funneling of cash that Herbert W. Kalmbach raised for the Watergate defendants.
- The discussions of Colson and Hunt regarding commutation of [illegible] for the defendant.
- The Ellsberg break-in by Hunt [illegible] Ehrlichman's direction.
- Frederick C. LaRue's attempts to raise money for the defendants.
- The payment by Kalmbach of $400,000 to Gov. George Wallace's election opponent.
- The Chappaquiddick investigation by Anthony Ulasewicz.
- The grand jury investigation of John N. Mitchell, Maurice H. Stans and Robert Vesco in connection with campaign contributions.
- Haldeman's involvement in Donald H. Segretti's political espionage activities.
- Colson's involvement with Hunt's activities.
- The containment of the Watergate investigation.
- Previous discussions of what action to take, including a suggestion by Ehrlichman that a new grand jury be convened.

The May 24 memo also cited numerous passages from the published transcript as well as alleging several discrepancies between the transcript and the tape.

Mr. Nixon's edited transcript shows that in discussing the infiltration of Muskie's presidential campaign by the Committee for the Re-election of the President, Dean said the campaign had been infiltrated by a secretary. According to Dixon's memo, the tape shows Mr. Nixon already knew about the infiltration, that he told Dean a secretary had [illegible]

[illegible] Mr. President.

P. They never bugged Muskie, though, did they?

D. No, they hadn't, but they had infiltrated it by a secretary.

P. By a secretary?

D. By a secretary and a chauffeur. There's nothing illegal about that.

The tape, according to Dixon's memo:

P. They had never bugged Muskie, though, did they?

D. No, they hadn't, but they had a, they had, uh, they'd—

P. (Unintelligible).

D. Infiltrated it by a, a, they had.

P. A secretary.

D. A secretary and a chauffeur. Nothing illegal about that.

According to the memo, the transcript ommitted remarks by Mr. Nixon showing he was aware of Ulasewicz's Chappaquiddick investigation and acquainted with a federal grand jury's investigation of Mitchell and Stans in New York.

Omitted were all of Mr. Nixon's comment in this exchange:

D. The other vulnerabilities: We've got a, uh, runaway grand jury up in the Southern District.

P. Yeah, I heard.

D. They're after Mitchell and Stans on some sort of bribe or influence peddling.

P. On Vesco.

D. With Vesco.

P. Yeah.